Sao Tome and Principe – Item 9
CHR 1988

TL1505-10

CHAIRMAN
MR ~~PRESIDENT~~,

ROBIN MAUGHAN ONCE WROTE: "DO NOT WEEP FOR THE DEAD; KEEP ALL YOUR LOVE FOR THE LIVING AND WEEP FOR THOSE WHO ARE STARVING OR TORTURED AND FOR THOSE DYING IN SPIRIT WHILE THEY LIVE. THEN DRY YOUR TEARS AND GO AWAY FROM THE VIBRATION OF PEOPLE... YOU WILL BEGIN TO SEE THAT ALL THINGS ARE SO RELATED THAT TORTURE OF A CHILD IN THE EAST AFFECTS ALL THE WORLD. YOU WILL SEE MEN AS THEY ARE AND AS THEY CAN BE. YOU HAVE SEEN THAT COMRADESHIP AND SACRIFICE CAN SPRING THE ADVENTURE OF BUILDING A NEW WORLD''.

ADRESSING THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION FOR THE FIRST TIME, I FIND THESE WORDS VERY APPROPRIATE, BECAUSE ULTIMATELY THE CHALLENGE BEFORE US IS ONE OF BUILDING A NEW WORLD. AND IT IS SO, MR CHAIRMAN, ~~PRESIDENT~~ BECAUSE WHEN ALL MEN ARE ASSURED OF THEIR LEGITIMATE HUMAN RIGHTS AND ARE ABLE TO ENJOY THEM; I AM SURE, WE WILL BE LIVING IN A DIFEERENT, AND CERTAINLY A BETTER WORLD. IN ITS OPENING REMARKS MR JAN MARTENSON, UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CONVEYED THAT SAME IDEA, I BELIEVE, WHEN HE SAID:
" IN THE FORTY YEARS SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION, HUMAN RIGHTS COME TO PLAY AN EVERMORE SIGNIFICANT AND PROMINENT ROLE ON THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA. THEIR INCREASING IMPORTANCE WAS ALREADY FORSEEN BY THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS WHICH CALLED FOR THE REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH IN FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS AS ONE OF THE FIRST PRIORITIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THAT NEW INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY TO TAKE SHAPE AFTER THE BLOODSHED AND DEVASTATION OF WAR. HUMAN RIGHTS ~~WAS~~ WERE SEEN AS AN INTRINSIC

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COMPONENT OF SUCH ENDEAVOURS, BASED AS THEIR WERE ON THE RECOGNITION OF THE "DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE HUMAN PERSON."

BECAUSE IN MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD THERE IS NOT SUCH RECOGNITION OF THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE HUMAN PERSON WE ARE UNDER THE DUTY TO "KEEP OUR LOVE FOR THE LIVING" AND LIVE UP TO OUR RESPONSABILITIES BY GREATER MORAL COMMITTMENT TO THE STRUGGLE OF THOSE " WHO ARE STARVING OR TORTURED AND FOR THOSE DYING IN SPIRIT WHILE THEY LIVE."

I MAKE THIS FEW COMMENTS, MR ~~PRESIDENT~~ CHAIRMAN, TO EXPLAIN TO YOU AND TO THE DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THIS COMMISSION HOW HONOURED AND PLEASED WE ARE IN SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE ENDEAVOURS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION. MY COUNTRY, INDEPENDENT SINCE 12 JULY 1975, HAS BEEN STRUGGLING TO LIVE UP TO ITS COMMITTMENTS TO THE DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. [~~AS MANY MEMBERS OF THIS COMMISSION KNOW WELL THIS IS NOT AN EASY TASK~~] WE ~~HAVE~~ FACE, AS MANY OTHERS, GREAT PROBLEMS IN CREATING THE CONDITIONS THAT WILL ENABLE OUR CITIZENS TO ENJOY IN THE FULLEST POSSIBLE WAY (~~THEIR LEGITIMATE HUMAN RIGHTS~~ ALL THE RIGHTS TO WHICH THEY ARE ENTITLED. HOWEVER, WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS OUR DETERMINATION TO PROCEED IN THE ROAD TOWARD THAT GOAL AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO BE JUDGED BY OUR EFFORTS IN THIS ~~YEAR~~. ~~AREA~~.

MAY I ASSURE YOU, SIR, AND ALL MEMBERS OF THIS COMMISSION, OF OUR LOYAL CONTRIBUTION AND OF OUR DESIRE TO BE, IN A VERY HUMBLE WAY, PART OF THE SUCESS OF OUR DELIBERATIONS.

I CAN'T PROCEED, MR ~~PRESIDENT~~ CHAIRMAN, WITHOUT EXPRESSING MY DELEGATION'S SATISFACTION IN SEEING YOU PRESIDING OVER THIS COMMISSION AND WITHOUT PLACING IN THE RECORD OUR CONFIDENCE IN YOUR ABILITY, AS WELL AS IN THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU, TO LEAD US TO A

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SUCESSFUL SESSION.

LET ME NOW TURN TO THE ITEM IN OUR AGENDA TODAY.

THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION IS TODAY A FUNDAMATEL PRINCIPLE THAT GOVERNS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,. THE PROCLAMATION BY THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE ADOPTION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF RESOLUTION 1514(XV) CONTAINING THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES HAVE PLAYED AND CONTINUES TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN HELPING PEOPLES SUBJECTED TO COLONIAL AND FOREIGN DOMINATION TO REALIZE THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE AND DEVELOPMENT.

THE NEED TO BRING TO AN END ALL FORMS OF COLONIALISM AND FOREIGN DOMINATION AND OPRESSION IS ALSO AN ETHICAL AND MORAL QUESTION SINCE IT AFFECTS THE ESSENTIAL HUMAN VALUES SPOUSED BY ALL CIVILIZED NATIONS.

ALL MEMBERS OF THIS COMMISSION WILL CERTAINLY UNDERSTAND THAT FOR STATES LIKE MY OWN, WHICH HAVE COME INTO BEING THANKS TO THE UNTIRING EFFORTS OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO IMPLEMENT RESOLUTION 1514(XV), THE RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLES, LARGE OR SMALL, RICH OR POOR, NO MATTER THEIR GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION, IS INDEED A QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE THAT OFFERS NO ROOM FOR COMPROMISE.

WHILE WE DO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENTS REGISTERED IN THE FIELD OF DECOLONIZATION DURING THE LAST TWO DECADES THERE IS A NUMBER OF PEOPLES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD STILL LIVING UNDER FOREIGN DOMINATION. TOWARDS THESE PEOPLES OUR CONCERN AND COMMITMENT MUST BE INCONDITIONAL AND TOTAL. OUR CONCERN IS GREATER WHEN THE DENIAL OF THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

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OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION IS CHARACTERIZED BY POLICIES OF REPRESSION AND INSTITUTIONALIZED VIOLENCE.

TELEVISION AND OTHER MEANS OF MASS COMMUNICATION MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO IGNORE THE PLIGHT OF THE PEOPLES OF NAMIBIA, SOUTH AFRICA AND PALESTINA, WHO ARE TORTURED, PROSECUTED AND SUBMITTED DAILY TO THE VIOLENCE OF THEIR OPRESSORS. THE SOLIDARITY OF MY GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE WITH THE PEOPLES OF SOUTH AFRICA, NAMIBIA, PALESTINE AND WESTERN SAHARA ~~ARE~~ IS in their struggle for self-determination and independence WELL KNOWN. ~~BUT TO THE CONSTRAINTS OF TIME LIMITATION~~ MY DELEGATION WILL BE DEALING WITH THOSE SITUATIONS IN SEPARATE STATEMENTS UNDER OTHER ITEMS IN OUR AGENDA.

TODAY I WOULD LIKE TO DEAL WITH THE PLIGHT OF ONE PEOPLE THAT ISN'T IN EVERYDAY'S NEWS. FROM TIME TO TIME, HOWEVER WE ARE FACED WITH SOME REPORTS, SOME NEWS AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO SHARE THEM WITH ALL OF US SO THAT WE WILL ABLE, I HOPE, TO ASSUME OUR RESPONSABILITIES. UNDER THE TITLE " A HIDDEN HOLOCAUST" IN THE PACIFIC" RICHARD H. STWART WROTE IN THE BOSTON GLOBE LAST DECEMBER 13 ~~LAST~~, AND I QUOTE," IT HAS BEEN CALLED THE " HIDDEN HOLOCAUST" SO FAR REMOVED FROM WORLD'S COUNSCIOUNESS THAT ONLY A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF THE TRAGIC EVENTS THAT HAVE RAVAGED THE POPULATION OF LITTLE KNOWN PACIFIC ISLAND OF EAST TIMOR...INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS AMINESTY INTERNATIONAL AND ASIA WATCH AS WELL AS A COALITION OF INTERNATIONAL CHURCH GROUPS HAVE PROVIDED REPORTS OF THE BRUTALITY INFLICTED ON THE TIMORESE BY INDONESIAN FORCES, INCLUDING SUMMARY EXECUTIONS, TORTURE, IMPRISONMENT WITHOUT TRIAL AND THE USE OF CIVILIANS AS WALLS IN FRONT OF INDONESIAN TROOPS BATTLING GUERRILLA FORCES...

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SOME EVIDENCE OF THE HUMAN SUFFERING CAN BE SURMISED FROM THE REPORT IN 1985 OF EAST TIMOR GOVERNOR MARIO CARRASCALAO WHO SAID THAT 100.000 EAST TIMORESE HAD DIED SINCE 1975 AND THE ISLAND HAD 20.000 ORPHANS, 13.000 WIDOWS AND 8.000 CRIPPLED OR MAIMED", END OF QUOTATION.

SOME PEOPLE MAY QUESTION THE ACCURACY OF THE ABOVE STATEMENTS SO LET ME MENTION SOME ADDITIONAL SOURCES.

COMMANDER GENERAL L.B. MOERDANI SAID IN A STATEMENT ON DECEMBER 31 LASTYEAR, AND I QUOTE FROM THE JAKART POST: "WE DO NOT GO THERE TO KILL. WE ARE NOT A COLONIAL POWER (SIC) ...IF THEY COME DOWN AND BEHAVE THEMSELVS WE WILL ACCEPT THEM. IF THEY THREATEN US WITH WEAPONS WE WILL SHOOT THEM...THERE ARE NOW ONLY ABOUT 500 OF THEM. SIX TO TEN YEARS AGO THERE WERE AN ESTIMATED 10.000 SUCH PEOPLE IN EAST TIMOR",END OF QUOTATION. I WILL NOT COMMENT SUCH STATEMENTS BUT I WOULD INVITE MEMBERS TO GIVE THEM SOME THOUGHT AND RELATE THEM TO THE FACT THAT THE SAME GENERAL RECOGNIZED THAT IT WILL TAKE "SOME TIME" BEFORE THE THREAT OF ARMED REBELLIONS CAN BE TOTALLY ELIMINATED./ IN THAT I CONCUR WITH THE GENERAL BECAUSE THE INDONESIA ARMY IS IN EAST TIMOR SINCE 1975. I THINK IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT GENERAL MOERDANI IS....THE CHAIRMAN OF EAST TIMOR DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE. INDEED THE QUESTION OF DECOLONIZATION OF EAST TIMOR HAS BEEN A PERMANENT CONCERN OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE FIVE AFRICAN PORTUGUESE SPEAKING COUNTRIES. AT THEIR ANNUAL SUMMIT MEETINGS THE HEADS OF STATE OF ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, GUINE-BISSAU, CAPE-VERDE AND SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE REAFFIRM THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THE STRUGGLE OF THE PEOPLE OF

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EAST TIMOR AND APPEAL TO MEMBER STATES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS TO HELP IN ANY POSSIBLE MANNER THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR TO REALIZE THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO FREEDOM AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

MY DELEGATION IS GRATEFUL TO THE NON-GOVERNAMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN EXPRESSING THEIR CONCERN OVER THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN EAST TIMOR. WE TOOK NOTE WITH SATISFACTION OF THE ACTION UNDERTAKEN BY FORTY UNITED STATES OF AMERICA SENATORS AND 144 MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO PROTESTED A CONDITIONS IN EAST TIMOR AND WROTE TO SECRETARY OF STATE GEOR SHULTZ THAT INDONESIAN FORCES WERE ENGAGED IN "A RENEWED OFFENSIVE" AGAINST TIMORESE INSURGENTS".

LATELY HIS Holyness POPE JOHN PAUL II, WHILE RECEIVING THE CREDENCIALS OF THE NEW INDONESIAN AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER THE SITUATION IN EAST-TIMOR IN THE FOLLOWING WORDS:

" THE CHATOLIC CHURCH'S UNIVERSAL MISSION OF SERVICES LEADS HER TO HOPE THAT PARTICULAR CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PROTECTION OF THE ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE OF EAST TIMOR".

~~ALL~~ THESE ENDEAVOURS AS WELL AS THE EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO FULFIL THE MANDATE ENTRUSTED TO HIM BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 37/30 OF 1982 ARE REASONS FOR US TO HOPE. HOWEVER, MY DELEGATION BELIEVES, THAT NO SATISFACTORY SOLUTION OF THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF ~~TIMOR LESTE~~ EAST TIMOR WILL BE FOUND UNLES THAT PEOPLE IS ALLOWED TO FREELY EXERCISE ITS FUNDAMENTAL

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RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION 1514(XV). IN ITS OPENING ADRESS MR. JAN MARTENSON, SAID: "IN SPECIFIC CASES, OF COURSE, WE MUST NOT FEAR TO SPEAK OUT UNEQUIVOCALLY WHEN THE NEEDS ARISES. IF OUR CRITERIA ARE KNOWN AND ACCEPTED, IF OUR STANDERS ARE TRULY UNIVERSAL AND OBJECTIVE, WE CAN SPEAK WITH CLEAR CONSCIENCE. WE ARE AWARE THAT SILENCE IS TOO OFTEN THE WILLING ACCOMPLICE OF TYRANY AND WE MUST NOT FORGET IT".

MY APPEAL TO ALL MEMBERS OF THIS COMMISSION IS JUST ONE : LET'S NOT FORGET THE PEOPLE OF EAST-TIMOR.

THANK YOU